



Lower Platte River CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

Rodney Verhoeff, Coordinator

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 16th, 2005 * 9:00 AM

**Held at the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
8901 S. 154th Street * Omaha, Nebraska 68138 * (402) 444-6222**

1. **Call to Order.** Rodney Verhoeff, LPRCA Coordinator, called the meeting of the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance (LPRCA) to order at 9:40 AM. Meeting was held at the Papio-Missouri River NRD Office in the Natural Resources Center located at 8901 S. 154th Street in Omaha, Nebraska. **Roll Call.** An attendance sheet was distributed and those in attendance signed in. A copy of this attendance sheet is available for inspection upon request.
2. **Proof of Legal Notice Presented.** Proof of publication was presented. The legal notice was published in the Omaha World-Herald – the statewide newspaper on August 11th, 2005. Notifications were sent to those on the e-mailing lists, mailing list, and press releases sent to all area newspapers.
3. **Approval of Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance (LPRCA) Minutes from May 27th, 2005 Meeting.** No modifications were made to the May 27th, 2005 draft minutes. Minutes were approved via general consensus.
4. **LPRCA Committee Establishment & Sign-Up. [ACTION]** Verhoeff handed out proposed LPRCA committee information and asked for input. The group suggested they take it back and review for next meeting when we will have a sign-up. Verhoeff said he would modify the sheets to have space for those interested to write in their names. Verhoeff said the committees will allow us to discuss items in more detail prior to the quarterly meetings. This would allow the committee to develop recommendations for the entire group to discuss. This may reduce meeting length and allow for a more in-depth discussion prior to the quarterly meetings. Verhoeff said having himself and an intern for staff makes it difficult to address all issues adequately and the committees will certainly help.
5. **Review of Informational Packets.** Verhoeff handed out informational packets with items such as articles, USGS Pre-proposal for the CIS project, summary of 2005 WRDA, the LPRCA Quarterly Report, Hwy 50 River Obstruction Removal Project Cooperative Agreement and 404 Permit, 2005 Airboat Tour Itineraries, and the 2005 Water Quality Open Registration form.
6. **Upcoming and Recent Meetings/Events.**
 - a. **LPRCA Water Quality Open Golf Tournament – Sept 1, 2005 * 10:00 a.m. Pres/12:30 p.m. start * Quarry Oaks.** Verhoeff reminded LPRCA members and attendees about the upcoming event. There are more educational activities planned this year including two presentations prior to the event from Dave Sands with the NLT and Tina Kurtz with DNR on LB962, more trivia signs, and six displays on the greens. There is still a lot of room for the event and Verhoeff stated he would like to fill the roster with 36 teams. Verhoeff referred to the registration form in the packets and also the online version on the LPRCA website.
 - b. **NARD Annual Conference – Sept 25-27, 2005. * Kearney Holiday Inn.**
 - c. **Lower Platte River Basin Mtng – Integrated Management Plan – Sept 27th * 1:30 p.m. * Kearney Holiday Inn.** This meeting will follow the NARD Conference and focus on LB 962.
 - d. **Next LPRCA Meeting – November/December 2005 [ACTION].** November 15th, 2005 at the LPNDRD starting at 9:30 a.m. The following meeting can be held at the LPSNRD since the office will be renovated and open for business.
 - e. **Others.** None were discussed.

7. LPRCA Member Contributions. Verhoeff mentioned that several member contributions have not been received yet for FY06 and we are starting to get low on funds for administrative costs. Verhoeff can give a presentation to any member organization that would like to hear about LPRCA activities. State agency contributions are set at \$5,416.67 while the NRDs have varied amounts depending upon how many projects they are involved in.

8. LPRCA Program and Project Updates.

- a. **LPRCA – General Activities** – Verhoeff discussed some of his daily activities and talked about the upcoming golf tourney. He can still use help. The LPSNRD is still in the temporary office but should be moving back by mid-October or early November.
- b. **River Obstruction Program – Hwy 50 Pilot project** – Tim Gokie with Olssons Associates gave a brief update on the Hwy 50 project. After a recent site survey, it looks like we have a 6-7-6 piling configuration with 6 pilings followed by a row of 7 pilings followed by 6 more pilings - - all covered with a 3-4 foot cement cap. The depth of the pilings is still unknown. A survey was underway to get elevations and more details on the number and configurations of the pilings. Olssons is working on the 30% plans with hopes to get bids out by mid-October. Work is scheduled for Dec and Jan. the Camp Ashland project is also moving forward with hopes to do a site visit and possibly a test hole. The NE Military Dept will fund this project through their Legacy Grant Program.
- c. **Environmental Carrying Capacity Study** – Verhoeff said that the project continues to move forward with the collection of land use plans/zoning regulations. Generally, this has gone smoothly, but some counties and communities are more difficult to obtain info from. HDR is also working on creating a base map to use for the GIS once additional data layers are collected. Hopefully, HDR can attend the next meeting and give an update. Verhoeff said he hoped that HDR is close to completing Phase I since we are considerable beyond our scheduled completion date.
- d. **Education/Multimedia Projects** – Next edition of the newsletter will be coming out this winter and submissions are encouraged from Alliance members. Verhoeff has been working with Craig Wacker, LPRCA Intern, on the kiosk program gathering ideas and cost estimates. He hopes to place four to five kiosks at public locations such as the Lied Bridge, Schilling WMA, Platte River State Rec Area, and others to be determined. The LPWMA has also been placing kiosks on noxious weeds throughout the corridor so we will need to work together to spread locations out. Verhoeff and Frank Albrecht with the NG&PC also mentioned looking into a primitive canoe landing at Schilling WMA.
- e. **WRDA-Authorized COE Projects** – WRDA is still being considered, but the House and Senate have not yet conferenced and come up with a combined bill. WRDA 2005 includes Lower Platte River Restoration language which has remained in all versions so far. We are looking at approximately \$10 million to carry out our projects and establish a corridor-wide water quality network.
 1. **W. Sarpy/Clear Creek – Camp Ashland** – There are still 2 cabins to raise on the Sarpy County side. The island clearing project is completed but there is some vegetation growing back. The island may need clearing every 1-2 years. Habitat and Rodeo herbicides have been approved by the USF&WS to use. The chutes on Vencil's Island will be approximately 4-5' in depth. The Platte to Platte chute is now underway, but the Platte to Elkhorn will have to wait until there is adequate funding. Of the total W. Sarpy/Clear Ck project costs - \$17 million, \$2.5 to \$3 million is for conservation measures. The current Senate Energy & Water Appropriation Bill has \$3 million for next FY. Agricultural land on Vencil's Island will become grassland in the future. Camp Ashland levee is nearing completion but will need fall seeding. There will be a conservation measure field tour on September 9th starting at 9 a.m. and departing from Linoma Beach.
 2. **Sand Creek/Lake Wanahoo** – Still waiting on word from the COE as to whether or not the local sponsors can move forward on the Lake Wanahoo structure without COE assistance to get the project moving and utilize available road funding before the deadline. This would save \$14 million
 3. **Antelope Valley** – Currently working on roadway construction for the big "T" intersection and other major transportation components. The first phase of the Antelope Creek channel is completed. Excavation for phase 2 is underway and material used for roadway to save costs. The BN bridge is completed and channel under is in the works. Recently, JAVA held 15 bus and 1 bike tour. Willow Point – The LPSNRD along with the COE is working to assist Willow Point with flood reduction through various means such as filling in low points and modifying existing levees/high points to

eliminate a 1/10th foot impact to the area. The impact is not the result of any feasibility project, but rather because of the new, revised floodplain mapping on the Platte River.

- f. **Airboat Tours** – The airboat tours were excellent this year. We had intended to have two smaller tours covering the upper stretches, but the interest was so great that we had two fairly large tours with 13 boats each and nearly 40 people. We did have some trouble getting airboats this year and the rising fuel costs had an impact. We had to raise the amount we pay airboaters to account for higher fuel costs. A copy of the itineraries and maps for the July 15th (Fremont to Camp Ashland) and July 29th (Fremont to Schuyler) tours were included in the packets. LPRCA members discussed the success of the tours and the importance of getting people out on the river. Verhoeff suggested we consider something new for next year so we don't overdo the airboat tour methodology and since we are experiencing more and more difficulty getting airboats each year. Ideas suggested included a bus tour, a canoe tour, or a river summit. An airboat tour would also not be out of the question if we feel we are still reaching the right audience with this method of education. Verhoeff suggested we think about it and discuss it at a future meeting.
- g. **Water Quality Open Golf Tournament**– Team registrations are coming in for the September 1, 2005 event, but there is still plenty of room. Verhoeff asked LPRCA members to spread the word and handed around additional registration forms. Since the item was discussed in a previous agenda item, no further discussion took place.
- h. **Infrastructure Studies**
 - 1. **Cass County – Louisville to Ashland Area** – Todd Skoog, coordinator for the project, updated the group. Now considering Louisville providing water supply instead of NRD and then pumping to South Bend area. Louisville has moved ahead with developing its own water supply and is not interested in getting a water supply from the NRD proposed wellfield. Wastewater portion of project is still on track. Lagoons at Camp Kitaki are undersized and many septic systems in the area are not to code. NEBCO will need to do improvements regardless so the NRD is looking to just replace with a sub-basin wastewater system. Looks like the project will qualify for some federal grants.

*****Skipped to Agenda Item 9 – LB 962 Update & Discussion*****

9. LB 962 Update & Discussion. The group discussed LB 962 – The Integrated Water Resources Legislation. All basins in Nebraska will be evaluated by DNR to determine if they are over-appropriated or fully-appropriated. All over-appropriated designations have been determined, so now the rest of the river basins including the Lower Platte River Basin will be evaluated. DNR must render a decision before January 1, 2006. There are a lot of rumors circulating that we will be fully-appropriated meaning a restriction on future water resource use/development for agriculture. There have been several meeting to discuss these issues including a joint NRD meeting in Fremont to answer questions. Verhoeff said that Tina Kurtz, DNR LB 962 Liaison, will be a presenter at the 2005 WQ Open. Also, Roger Patterson, Director of the DNR, will be leaving at the end of August and will probably make a decision on which criteria they will use - the 28-40 (28% decline in 40 years) or 10-50 (10% decline in 50 years). The latter is the more far-reaching and could cause some overlap into other river basins and subsequently other NRD jurisdictions. If determined to be fully-appropriated, the NRDs in that basin would need to work jointly with DNR to develop a joint Integrated Management Plan.

Returned to Agenda Item 8(i)(2) – Infrastructure Studies – Sarpy County

- 2. **Sarpy County** – Marlin Petermann handed out several handouts on the project including several maps of (1) Future Wastewater Infrastructure Master Plan, (2) Interim Sewage Treatment Infrastructure, and (3) Interceptor Sewer Plan. The water supply side for Sarpy County has 3 potential sources of water – MUD, Springfield, and Papillion. For the wastewater side, they are dealing with 3 drainages. Only Springfield has a treatment plant currently. Areas near the Platte River are targeted for less intense development according to the Sarpy County Comprehensive Plan. For these areas, there may be septic systems or small package treatment plants.

- i. **Others** – Verhoeff mentioned the Cumulative Impact Study (CIS) and its status. The COE had some funding available (\$50,000) that needed to be spent before the end of the FY05 (September 30) and we would need to match with a 1:1 match. They also have new money in FY06 (\$75,000) available for a 1:1 match. In total, the COE has \$125,000 available and the CIS partners would need to match with \$125,000. For the past couple of months, Verhoeff has been working to set-up an amendment and an addendum to the CIS Interlocal Agreement to tap into the available funding. At this point, we are working on getting all signatures of parties involved to expand the partnership and to set up the funding contribution structure. The COE will provide the GIS technical staffing. This is a change from the original intent where we planned to use an outside consultant. We hope to develop a work plan to further define the scope.

10. MoPac Trail Update.

In the PMRNRD, construction for Hwy 50 to Lied Bridge should begin next spring. Next year, they will be looking at the connecting trail from Springfield to Chalco Hills Rec Area and connecting into existing trails. IN the LPSNRD, the consultant completed a route analysis from Wabash to the Lied Bridge, approximately 8 miles. To date, the recommendation is to go off road from the county road with a separate trail. The LPSNRD will need to approve a corridor route and then work on right-of-way (ROW) issues. Verhoeff mentioned he is looking at putting up a kiosk at the Lied Bridge.

11. Other Items of Interest. No other items were brought up for discussion.

12. Adjourn. The August 16th, 2005 meeting of the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance adjourned at 12:15 p.m.